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CHAPTER XXV.—(Continued.)

At last a battle was imminent. There
had been terrible girdings in the papers
at the long delay; all sorts of disasters
were prophesied; the intrenchments were
impregnable—thousands of troops were
marching to the aid of Arabi—a battle,
even if it were successful, must inevitably
be attended with fearful loss of life.
On the night of the 12th June did not
close her eyes. All night long she saw the
picture she had seen that night when
Dallas was trying on his belt and waving
his sword in the air. That had been a
presentiment, she felt sure. On the mor-
row, or the day after, she would take up
the paper and read his name among the
dead, as she had done in fancy a hun-
dred times.

All the morning of the 13th she went
about looking like a ghost, with pale lips
and hollow eyes. At noon Tom brought
the news to her. Even he was elated and
interested this time. "Glorious news!"
a tremendous victory; our loss compara-
tively trifling.

A momentary sense of relief came over
June, to be crossed immediately by a mis-
giving. "A comparatively trifling loss?"
to a nation may mean hundreds of stricken
homes, hundreds of broken women's
hearts.

She must ask the question.
"The Guards?" she faltered.
Tom did not know; no particulars had
arrived yet; this was only a telegram from
the station. But he would ride over him-
self at once; for, even if he had been jeal-
ous of Dallas, he did not forget in the mo-
ment of danger that he was his cousin,
and was really anxious to hear of his
safety.

The time until Tom returned seemed
like eternity. Even then the news was
meager. The brunt of the loss had fallen
on the Highland regiments; it was
thought the Guards had not been active-
ly engaged.

Mrs. Trevanion was to arrive that even-
ing. She would be sure to know.
Mrs. Trevanion came, armed with the
latest intelligence. She had called in
Downing street before going to the sta-
tion, and had heard the latest intelligence
from a personal friend. Foot Guards un-
der fire, but in second line.

The third week of Mrs. Trevanion's
visit was drawing to a close. It was a
dull, gray afternoon. June was cover-
ing over a fire; she had a fit of shivering,
and felt more than usually unwell. For
the last few days a listless feeling had
crept over her; she had no appetite, and
felt ill and depressed. She had refused
to have a doctor, but to-day Mrs. Tre-
vanion had insisted, and a servant had
been dispatched to summon his friend
Dr. Elsom.

"I wonder," said Mrs. Trevanion, "how
Dallas is getting on? I don't think his
last letter was quite so cheery as usual.
He had looked forward so much to Cairo,
but it seems they are all disappointed
and disgusted with it, and would rather
be in the desert."

"Oh," exclaimed June, suddenly, with
her eyes fixed on the window, "there is
Agnes! I am getting positively to hate
the sight of her!"

"Leave her to me," observed Mrs. Tre-
vanion. "I will talk to her."

A minute later, Miss Elsomere was
announced. She came in with a longer
face than usual, and in her hand she held
an orange envelope.

As June saw it, a deadly chill took
possession of her; she shivered violently;
her teeth chattered in her head.

"I have some dreadful news," said Ag-
nes, fixing her cruel eyes on June's face.
"This telegram came for mamma from
Austin Violet. She was out, and papa
opened it. Mr. Brock died of fever last
night in Cairo."

Mrs. Trevanion uttered a cry, then,
starting up, ran to June.

She had turned white as death, and
was falling back senseless in her chair.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lady Nevill carried upstairs to bed,
and it was more than a month before she
was able to be moved from it again. The
doctor pronounced that she was sinking
for a fever—typhoid, he feared. From the
moment when Agnes told the cruel news,
she never perfectly recovered conscious-
ness, but was either insensible or delir-
ious.

The day after June was taken ill little
Tom began to sicken, and in five days he
died. Sir Thomas was like one stunned;
but his intense anxiety about his wife
made the loss of the child perhaps less
agonizing. If only June were spared to
him, he felt he could bear that other
grief, awful though it was; he realized
again how he loved his wife, and what
her death would mean to him. His re-
morse was grievous to witness. He
made no attempt to conceal it from Mrs.
Trevanion. Indeed, it was the only thing
he could talk of. He clung to her, im-
plore her not to leave him. He seemed
to hang on her presence as the only chance
of saving his darling.

To Mrs. Trevanion's relief, the name of
Dallas never crossed June's lips. During
those dreadful days of her poor little
child's illness, death and burial, June
was happily unconscious. She knew nothing
of Tom's agonized face, as he came in
with hushed steps and haggard eyes from
that other chamber where half his hopes
lay dead—from the little waxen figure
that it would have broken June's heart to
see. This anguish at least she was spared.

When the funeral was over poor Tom
used to creep up to the nursery and sit
with his face in his hands. Sometimes he
would take up one of little Tom's toys,
and then, poor fellow, he would burst
into a terrible passion of dry sobs. When
he came down he would go on tiptoe into

befallen them. June had almost recover-
ed her health, though not her spirits. Her
child's death had been a crushing blow;
it seemed to her a sort of divine retribu-
tion for having thought too little of him
in his lifetime.

Six months ago anyone might safely
have predicted that the boy's death would
have fallen with ten times more severity
on Tom than on June; but such was not
the case. Tom was almost cheerful, while
his wife was a prey to the deepest grief.
Now Tom only had one object in life—
to devote himself to June, to heap love,
affection, care upon her, to prove to her
beyond all doubt how thoroughly and
entirely she occupied his heart. And June,
if she remained sad, thoroughly ap-
preciated his kindness and tenderness, and
was always ready to reciprocate it after
a gentle and subdued fashion, very differ-
ent from her gay, coquettish manner of
old. Time would doubtless bring that
back, but it would have been strange and
unnatural that she should so soon forget.

Her heart had returned to its old alle-
giance. Tom was again the one man in
the world whom she loved, and whose
existence was necessary to her. When
she thought of her dead young hero, it
was with the tenderness of a sister's love,
and she could thank God, oh, how fervently,
that no word had ever been spoken
between them that might tarnish her
memory of him or cause her a single pang
of self-reproach.

Mr. and Mrs. Carslake were their only
guests, and thoroughly congenial ones.
Madge's brightness and gaiety, tempered
by her sympathy for her cousin's distress,
made her presence most welcome to June,
and Mr. Carslake, who possessed a very
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